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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2008

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MIR. 20 April 1953

SUBJECT: Johann SANITZER Case

TO : 25.40

FROM : 25.50B

Declassified and Approved for Release
by the Central Intelligence Agency
Date: 2001

1. In VIENNA 16-18 April 1953 I read a summary of all traces (or nearly all) pertinent to the SANITZER case, prepared in draft form in the past couple of weeks by a case officer (probably junior type) of VOB. In brief, the findings are (a) the case is heavily associated with Adolf SLAVIK, the notorious leader of the (presumably Communist-sponsored) Nationale Liga, an Austrian political party seeking to recruit ex-Nazis to pro-East orientation; but (b) enough other traces of Subject exist to make the case worth follow-up. But there is a distinct possibility that all these other traces come from the same ultimate sources, which will be the principal objective of preliminary investigation. If SLAVIK is found to be the primary source of all reports on Subject, VOB will be inclined to drop the case (unless of course useful leads into SLAVIK develop.)

2. The following is known about this case:

- a. SANITZER was interned in Camp Marcus Orr (SALZBURG) by US authorities, turned over to Austrians in 1947. While in MARCUS ORR, his cell-mates were Adolf SLAVIK and Franz P IRACHER; he was also reported to be very close friends with one Max SPINDELBOEK while there.
- b. Subject was removed from STEIN an der Donau by Soviet authorities in February 1949. Prior to his sentencing (he received life imprisonment from Austrian courts), while still in the Landes-

EXEMPTIONS Section 3 (b) (1) Gericht WIEN, Subject attempted to have US authorities intervene

2)(A) Privacy
2)(B) Methods/Sources
2)(G) Foreign Relations

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2 40 Sanitzer

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as he foresaw that Soviet authorities would probably abduct him if he were sent to STEIN, but US authorities viewed his approaches as attempts to evade Austrian justice, and took no action on his requests.

- c. Since his removal from STEIN, there has been no reliable, positive identification of Subject anywhere.

3. The following are the most common rumors:

- a. Subject is in POTSDAM or BAUTZEN, with a leading position with East German security forces.
- b. Subject is actually in jail, but his name is being used in recruitment attempts made among ex-Nazis, particularly Gestapo (Subject was in Amt IV) by the Soviets.
- c. Subject is frequently, incorrectly, reported to be a code and cipher expert (cryptanalyst). He is not, but did study codes and ciphers while interned in MARCUS ORR.

4. It is noteworthy that a great deal of the information (or rumor) in the files on this case stems from ZIPPER or GROSSBAHN. There are, however, some bits from GREENGROECER - 1 (who, incidentally, has never turned over his file on Subject, though he once promised to do so, then later stated the file was misplaced). Other principal sources are newspapermen, significantly Armin RENTMEISTER, whose reputation for reliability has been badly strained through the years.

5. There is no communication between Subject and his wife. Austrian police seem satisfied on this point, and openly indicate they are watching her mail.

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6. Investigation of this case has turned up the fascinating fact that the OSS interrogation of Subject, practically the basic document in the case, in all probability gives only pseudonyms for Subject's associates.

7. Following are his relatives, as known:

- ✓ a. Father, Johann, born 1887 in ZEMENTDORF, Austria; current address u/k.
- ✓ b. Mother, Theresia, nee REICHEL, born 1879 in SALZBURG, divorced 1926, current address unknown.
- ✓ c. Brother, Hermann, born 1906, known to have served in Wehrmacht, no current address.
- ✓ d. Sister, Elsa, married name FOLTENIK, born 1912, known to have been in MUNICH in 1945.
- ✓ e. Sister, Anna, married name BUCHBERGER, born 1908, teacher, no current address known.
- f. Wife, Anna, nee GROEBER, born 1906 VIENNA, now residing VIENNA/PERCHTOLDSDORF, Hochstrasse 34 (WIEN XXV - Soviet Zone). She is employed at the Hans Malleczek Machine and Tool Co.
- ✓ g. Daughter, Helga, born 1932, no address known.

8. The following people are believed to have had some association with Subject in the past, or to have some information about him now (they have been mentioned from time to time in reports circulated on Subject):

- a. Franz PIRACHER
- b. Helmut DACHS ✓
- c. Wilhelm KOPETSKY ✓
- d. ✓ Anton BROEDL (who allegedly was target of a recruitment attempt made at least in the name of SANITZER) (R-14872 29 4M)
- e. fnu JOBST (probably incorrect spelling, ex-Gestapo man)
- f. Erhardt FOCHE ✓
- g. Kaethe GANSTERER (who claims to have been shown - but not allowed

to retain - a letter to her from SANITZER. Bearers of the letter were two GRAZ policemen - it is alleged).

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- h. Anton HASLINGER ✓
- i. fnu HUEBER ✓
- j. Hans KASPAR (police official) ✓
- k. Franz PRIEWASSER ✓
- l. Eduard MAHEL (ZIPPERITE - VOB knows of him thru us)
- m. Walther PROCH ✓
- n. fnu RAAB ✓
- o. Gustav STONEK ✓
- p. Josef STEINER ✓
- q. Karl URRAN
- r. Johann FLEISCHACKER (a well-known fabricator who failed ISFLUTTER, and was therefore instantly hired for project BEDUFFY, a late but not lamented Polish "operation" of MOB).
- s. ^{or} Karl LEUTGEB, whose first name may possibly be Lambert instead.

9. VOB would welcome our attempts to approach Subject's wife. They requested that we check other lines of approach in advance, and promised to send us pertinent communications regarding the case, for information, in the future.

10. I don't believe VOB is aware I copied out the above data. It is of course for internal use only, not for ZIPPER. VOB is not likely to take very energetic action in this case as it now stands, feeling there is too much chance that the whole case is illusory, a fabrication, deception, or red herring. VOB does not at this time plan to pressure GREENGROECER-1, feeling the case is not of enough importance to make it an issue with him (as contrasted to other issues they must raise with him). They do have certain leads, notably into contract agents (at least one) about which

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little can be said at the moment, but of course explaining their request for checks in advance. The wife lead, incidentally, appears a poor prospect, as she was evicted from her apartment by the Soviets long ago, and despite numerous efforts has not been able to get the place de-requisitioned. It is argued that, were stories of SANITZER true, the Soviets would also take care of her. It also strikes me as ominous that so many reports on this case originate with ZIPPER, and tie back to West German newspaper sources; Willi HOETTL is also plumping the case (though he is so well acquainted with it that he spells the name SA HNITZER). In short, could this be BADEN bei BAUTZEN?

11. Recommend you address a request to VOB in writing for the identity,
present location and activities of Subject's former associates. ^{VOB is} ~~They are~~
working on this aspect (but plagued by the difficulty cited that many names given OSS appear to be phonies). I told them such a request would be forthcoming, and they agreed it was worth doing some research on. VOB just doesn't have any firm information on Subject's Sovzone contacts; his location is obscure, his activities conjecture; his family is known only as above. (All this in response to your notes on SVIEN 8983)

12. I/ remain available for discussion and/or further VIENNA investigation.